Therefore, there should be a coodinated effort by the Central Government and the State Governments together to implement this Act because this is a Central Act. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether they would give direction to the State Governments from the Labour Ministry with regard to those areas where a number of quarries are there and for releasing bonded labourers who are working in those quarries.

SHRI K. CHANDRA SHEKHAR RAO: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that the Government of India did react to the case of August 2004 on a complaint lodged by one Sarpam Irular Tozhilarlar Sangam. It is not only the State Governments even if we receive a private complaint in the Government of India, we respond to it. The Redhill area of Tamil Nadu comprises Thiruvallur, Tiruttani and Ponneri. A large number of complaints are received from that area. The Government of India is also concerned about the matter. We will definitely look into the matter. I will send a special officer or a special team to look into the whole issue.

Vallarpadam International Container Trans-Shipment Terminal

*26. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Vallarpadam International Container Trans-shipment Terminal, which is Kerala's dream project is waiting for approval from his Ministry for the last five months;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay on Government's part in sanctioning the project;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that as the Indian ports lack full fledged trans-shipment terminal facilities, the major chunk of Indian container traffic is directed to foreign hubs like Colombo, Singapore and Dubai; and

(d) the efforts Government propose to make to accord an early sanction of the project?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d): Government sanction to the proposal of Cochin Port Trust, as envisaged under section 42(3) of Major Port Trusts Act, 1963, for award of the contract for development and operation of International Container Transhipment Terminal (ICTT) on Build, Operate & Transfer (BOT) basis to M/s. Dubai Port International (DPI), Dubai, UAE was communicated to Cochin Port Trust on 9th September, 2004. The validity of the bid by M/s. DPI for the project was due to expire on 20th October, 2004. Cochin port Trust issued the Letter of Intent (LoI) for the project to M/s. DPI on 16th September, 2004. Thus there has been no delay on the part of the Government in sanctioning the project. DPI has confirmed its acceptance of LoI on 15.10.2004, subject to certain conditions.

The draft License Agreement for the project, as at present, envisages two licenses under the same Agreement, one for the operation and management of existing Rajiv Gandhi Container Terminal (RGCT) for a maximum period of $8^1/_2$ years from the date of the Agreement and the other for the development, construction, operation and management of ICTT on BOT basis for a period of 30 years commencing from the Date of Commencement of license period for ICTT. The Licensee is not obliged to commence construction of ICTT until achievement of threshold volume of traffic of 4 lakh Twenty feet Equivalent Units (TEUs) per annum at RGCT even if the Port Trust fulfills all the conditions precedent on its part as set out in the draft License Agreement. However, pursuant to the directions of the Government that further action may be taken to expeditiously start the work on the project, Cochin Port Trust, after consultations with M/s. DPI, has approached the Department of Shipping on 27.11.2004 for approval to the revised draft License Agreement which, inter-alia, envisages commencement of construction of ICTT not later than 2 years from the date of handing over of RGCT subject ot the Port Trust fulfilling the conditions precedent on its part as set out in the revised draft License Agreement and commissioning of ICTT not later than 2 years from the date of commencement of construction.

The Government is aware that a portion of Indian origin/bound container traffic is transhipped in ports outside India. Goverment is committed to the development of infrastructure in Indian Ports including at ICTT at Cochin Port so as to reduce transhipment outside India.

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, I thank you for this opportunity. I am very happy that Vallarpadam Project has been cleared. My question is addressed because of certain serious concerns about the governance that is given to this country by the UPA Government. Our hon. Prime Minister in consonance with this proven and unimpeachable record has promised to the country a corruption free Government. Sir, on August 16, a Division Bench of Kerala High Court considered an application filed by an NGO were several allegations were made against the Government and directed the Government to answer why they have delayed this project. This project along with certain others—some of them- have found a mention as a commitment in the Budget Speech. For six long months that sanction was also not forth coming. The entire Kerala was united because this is going to add 20 per cent to the GDP of Kerala. It is going to add about one lakh in employment immediately. So this is very important for the future of Kerala. So, my question is: May I know whether the allegations were entertained, and notices issued to this Government, which has promised us a corruption free Government? This is important. Sir added to that, a senior functionary of the Congress Party who was no less than a General Secretary of that Party, he is a Member of this august House, he is sitting here. Shri Vayalar Ravi went on record saying that there were certain international interests working against this project at the UPA Government and money was being spent on the UPA Government. the Member is sitting here. Sir, I have got the record.

श्री सभापतिः मैं समझता हूं ...(**व्यवधान**)...आप एक मिनट सुन लीजिए। .....एक मिनट....

Please hear me.

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, my question is immediately after this.

श्री सभापतिः आपने मुझे चार्जेज के बारे में कोई सूचना नहीं दी, इसलिए जो कुछ कहा है, मैं इसको रिकॉर्ड पर नहीं जाने दूंगा।

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, these are the questions. My second supplementary, Sir, is: Why was it delayed? The senior functionary is sitting here. It is his Government, the UPA Government. He has said.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please don't repeat all the charges. If you want to level charges, then stick to the rules.

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, the Government is here. My question is: whether there were any corruptions and whether any inquiry has been conducted on the charges made by Shri Vayalar Ravi?

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Sir, the hon. Member is totally mis-informed for which I am very sorry. There was not at all a single delay as far as this Goverment is concerned. Sir, the Cabinet approval for this project was communicated to the Port on 9th September. The Port has issued a 'letter of intent' on 16th September. The party has given the acceptance on 15.10.2004. The bid was valid up to 20.10.04. Where is the chance of delay or any such thing? I think, he is totally mis-informed.

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: This charge has been made by Shri Vayalar Ravi who is a Member of this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have put your supplementary questions. Please take your seat.

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: My interest is to find out whether this UPA Government is functioning in a corruption free manner or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. Shri Vayalar Ravi.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Sir, I am not wasting much of your time but in one sentence I will give an explanation. I am associated with the Cochin Port for the last thirty years. I am a Member of the Cochin Port for the last twenty-seven years. So my association with the trade union leader and the interest of the Port in Kerala and its workers is prime. My effort is also there. I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister because the earlier bidder—I do not want to name any company here—wanted to scuttle the whole project. So, he made some kind of allegations and wrote a letter to everybody, including the Minister. I have got a copy of it. So, I wrote to the Prime Minister saying that this was a deliberate letter written by this particular company to thwart the whole project. He is quoting from that letter. That letter is to prevent any attempt to delay the project and the Port Trust support of the DPI bidding. I was not there. My interest is Kerala because I do not want the project to be delayed by this company. I do not want to name the company. I do not want to use this forum to blackmail them. The Minister has rightly said that everything is going on time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary.

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: My second supplementary is...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary is over.

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: No, Sir, my second supplementary is not over...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't waste time. I have heard you. बैठिए। I will not allow you आपने दोनों सप्लीमेंटरी कर लिए, बैठ जाइए।

SHRI EKANATH K.THAKUR: I am prepared to authenticate what Shri Vayalar Ravi has said in his reply.

SHRI CHAIRMAN: I will not allow you. देखिए, मैं आपको बता दूं, इसका कोई मतलब नहीं है। ...(**व्यवधान**)...

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: He has said money is being spent. It is his Government. My interest is in the nation, the entire country. We belong to India.

श्री सभापतिः यह नहीं होगा कि आप जब मरजी आए तब चार्ज लगा दें। आप चार्ज लगाने के पहले एक मिनट सुन लीजिए। चार्ज लगाने से पहले मुझे इंटिमेट कीजिए। कह रहे हैं ना मैम्बर कि वे यूनियन के हैं।

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, I want a direction from you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: First, let him finish his supplementary ...*(Interruptions)*... Please take your seat...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री संतोष बागड़ोदिया: आप चेयरमैन साहब की रूलिंग को भी नहीं मानते हैं ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat....(Interruptions)..... मैं आपसे बात करूंगा। ...(**व्यवधान**)... First, let him finish...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: After long years of waiting the Dubai Port International has come forward to take up the project. This is the only company which succeeded in the bidding; the Government accepted the proposals and the Cochin Port Trust has also agreed. Now, it is in the final stages. There are vested interests trying to scuttle the whole process

again. We, the Kerala people, are worried. So, we fully support the action of the Government.

In this context, I would like to know from the hon. Minister when the Government is going to sign the final agreement. That is all. Now, it is in the final stages. I request the hon. Minister to explain the position.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, the Cabinet, in its wisdom, has directed me and the hon. Finance Minister to see whether any early migration could be done to begin the process. It has directed both the Ministers to take up the matter and address the issue whether migration could be done early from the RGCT to ICTT. After that, the hon. Finance Minister and myself have advised the port to have a dialogue with the company. They have to migrate after eight-and-a-half years and only at a time when the traffic comes up to the level of 4 lakh TEUs per annum. Now, they have agreed to reduce the period from eight-and-a-half years to four years. At the same time, irrespective of the condition of achieving 4 lakh TEUs per annum, now, they have agreed to move. Now, this is under consideration and it will be shortly approved and sent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ekanath Thakur, what is your second supplementary?

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, Mr. Vayalar Ravi is a part of the UPA...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, don't take any name...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, my second suplementary is not about corruption but it is pertaining to the Rajiv Gandhi Container Terminal. Sir, there is a question about this agreement. This agreement, which have been signed, says that the Dubai Port International, the company which is going to look after this entire project, has been given a licence for 30 years and a threshold limit of 4 lakh TEUs has been prescribed. Now, if these units...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: If this is not reached, the agreement will lapsed after ten years. What is the compensation that the Government of India will be receiving for allowing Dubai Port International to use Rajiv

Gandhi Terminal for ten years if , finally, this agreement has to be abrogated as provided in the agreement?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, it is not ten years. Actually, the bidder has agreed to migrate from the Rajiv Gandhi Container Terminal to ICDC within two to four years. Within that time, whether the traffic reaches 4 lakh TEUS or not, they have to move. This is the latest condition that we have communicated to them.

Global Positioning System

*27. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:†

Will the MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is planning to provide Global Positioning System (GPS) for motor vehicles in Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai etc.;

(b) if so, the details of the System and how it would help the people;

(c) by when this would be implemented in Delhi;

(d) whether his Ministry is also working on National Spatial Data infrastructure along with GPS; and

(e) if so, the details thereof.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. This Ministry is planning to provide data for Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata and Ahmedabad for putting in place the Global Positioning System (GPS) on moter vehicles. GPS is an instrument freely available in the market.

(b) The digital maps along with GPS can be put to multifarious uses like helping people to know alternative routes for their

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri B.J. Panda.